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Proclamation 7812—Patriot Day, 2004

September 10, 2004

*By the President of the United States
of America*

A Proclamation

Three years ago, our country was ruthlessly attacked, and more than 3,000 innocent people lost their lives. We will always remember the victims: sons and daughters, husbands and wives, dads and moms, family members, co-workers, and friends. And we will always be inspired by the heroism and decency of our fellow citizens on that day. Police, firefighters, emergency rescue personnel, doctors, nurses, and many others risked their own lives to save the lives of their fellow citizens. They demonstrated the great character and bravery of our Nation, and they embody the great spirit of America.

Since September 11th, America has fought a relentless war on terror around the world. We are staying on the offensive in this war—striking the terrorists abroad so we do not have to face them here at home. We pray that God watch over our brave men and women in uniform and all who are waging this war and working to keep America safe. And we pray for their families. In the face of danger, America is showing its character. Three years after the attack on our country, Americans remain strong and resolute, patient in a just cause, and confident of the victory to come.

By a joint resolution approved December 18, 2001 (Public Law 107–89), the Congress has designated September 11 of each year as “Patriot Day.”

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim September 11, 2004, as Patriot Day. I call upon the Governors of the United States and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, as well as appropriate officials of all units of government, to direct that the flag be flown at half-staff on Patriot Day. I

call upon the people of the United States to observe Patriot Day with appropriate ceremonies and activities, including remembrance services, to display the flag at half-staff from their homes on that day, and to observe a moment of silence beginning at 8:46 a.m. eastern daylight time to honor the innocent victims who lost their lives as a result of the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this tenth day of September, in the year of our Lord two thousand four, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-ninth.

George W. Bush

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The President’s Radio Address

September 11, 2004

Good morning. This is a day of remembrance for our country. And I am honored to be joined at the White House today by Americans who lost so much in the terrible events of September the 11th, 2001, and have felt that loss every day since.

Three years ago, the struggle of good against evil was compressed into a single morning. In the space of only 102 minutes, our country lost more citizens than were lost in the attack on Pearl Harbor. Time has passed, but the memories do not fade.

We remember the images of fire and the final calls of love and the courage of rescuers who saw death and did not flee. We remember the cruelty of enemies who murdered the innocent and rejoiced in our suffering. We remember the many good lives that ended too soon which no one had the right to take. And our Nation remembers the families left behind to carry a burden of sorrow. They have shown courage of their own, and with the help of God’s grace and with support from one another, the families of terror victims have shown a strength that survives

all hurt. Each of them remains in the thoughts and prayers of the American people.

The terrorist attacks on September the 11th were a turning point for our Nation. We saw the goals of a determined enemy, to expand the scale of their murder and force America to retreat from the world. And our Nation accepted a mission: We will defeat this enemy.

The United States of America is determined to guard our homeland against future attacks. As the September the 11th Commission concluded, our country is safer than we were 3 years ago, but we are not yet safe.

So every day, many thousands of dedicated men and women are on duty—as air marshals, airport screeners, cargo inspectors, border patrol officers, and first-responders. At the same time, Americans serving in the FBI and CIA are performing their daily work with professionalism, while we reform those agencies to see the dangers around the next corner. Our country is grateful to all our fellow citizens who watch for the enemy and answer the alarms and guard America by their vigilance.

The United States is determined to stay on the offensive and to pursue the terrorists wherever they train or sleep or attempt to set down roots. We have conducted this campaign from the mountains of Afghanistan to the heart of the Middle East to the horn of Africa to the islands of the Philippines to hidden cells within our own country. More than three-quarters of Al Qaida's key members and associates have been detained or killed. We know that there is still a danger to America. So we will not relent until the terrorists who plot murder against our people are found and dealt with.

The United States is also determined to advance democracy in the broader Middle East, because freedom will bring the peace and security we all want. When the peoples of that region are given new hope and lives of dignity, they will let go of old hatreds and resentments, and the terrorists will find fewer recruits. And as governments of that region join in the fight against terror instead of harboring terrorists, America and the world will be more secure. Our present work in Iraq and Afghanistan is difficult. It is also

historic and essential. By our commitment and sacrifice today, we will help transform the Middle East and increase the safety of our children and grandchildren.

Since September the 11th, the sacrifices in the war on terror have fallen most heavily on members of our military and their families. Our Nation is grateful to the brave men and women who are taking risks on our behalf at this hour. And America will never forget the ones who have fallen, men and women last seen doing their duty, whose names we will honor forever.

The war on terror goes on. The resolve of our Nation is still being tested. And in the face of danger, we are showing our character. Three years after the attack on our country, Americans remain strong and resolute, patient in a just cause, and confident of the victory to come.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:06 a.m. from the Oval Office at the White House. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

Remarks on the Terrorist Attacks in Russia

September 12, 2004

Mr. Ambassador, thank you for receiving Laura and me. I'm here to express my country's heartfelt sympathies for the victims and the families who suffered at the hands of the evil terrorists. The United States stands side by side with Russia as we fight off terrorism, as we stand shoulder to shoulder to make the world a more peaceful place and a free place.

The atrocities that took place in the school were beyond comprehension. Many in America and, I know, many in Russia simply cannot conceive the hearts of a person that would mow down innocent children. And the killers, once again, reminded us—remind us of the duties we have as free people to work in concert, to work in unity, to make this world a better place.

And so, Mr. Ambassador, I'm honored. Please pass on my very best wishes to President Vladimir Putin, a man who I admire.